

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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O 311825Z OCT 75 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3265

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ALGIERS 3226

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, SS, MO, MR, SP, AG

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA: MESSAGE FOR BOUMEDIENE

REF: STATE 258217

1. SUMMARY: SECRETARY'S MESSAGE OF OCTOBER 30 DELIVERED TO BOUMEDIENE. LATTER MORE RELAXED THAN HE WAS DAY BEFORE, BUT STILL MAINTAINING HASSAN'S MARCH INTO SAHARA WILL HAVE TO BE STOPPED, OR AREA STABILITY WILL SUFFER SERIOUSLY. IMPLIES US INTERESTS AT STAKE. THINKS WALDHEIM PROPOSAL OFFERS WAY OUT FOR HASSAN, BUT UNWILLING SPELL OUT SCENARIO HE ENVISAGES. END SUMMARY
2. DELIVERED MESSAGE IN REFTEL TO BOUMEDIENE AT 12:30 TODAY. FOUND HIM IN SOMEWHAT MORE RELAXED AND FRIENDLY MOOD THAN HE WAS LAST NIGHT BUT HIS POSITION THE SAME. HE FEELS RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT SAHARA PROBLEM RESTS WITH UNITED NATIONS AND UNITED STATES AND THAT ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GIVE A QUOTE LITTLE PUSH UNQUOTE TO HASSAN TO GET HIM TO ADJOURN MARCH.
3. WHEN I HAD FINISHED READING MESSAGE TO HIM BOUMEDIENE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR IT AND ASKED WHETHER I THOUGHT YOU WERE REALLY WORKING ON THIS PROBLEM. I SAID YOU HAD HAD A NUMBER OF OTHER PRESSING MATTERS PREOCCUPYING YOU

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BUT THAT I HAD CONVEYED LAST NIGHT'S MESSAGE BY SPECIAL

CHANNEL AND WAS CERTAIN YOU HAD FOCUSED ON IT AND WERE MAKING A SINCERE EFFORT TO RESOLVE PROBLEM. BOUMEDIENE THEN LAUNCHED INTO LONG PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION OF PROBLEM.

4. HE SAID THAT MOROCCAN ACTIONS THREATENED TO UPSET AREA EQUILIBRIUM, AN EQUILIBRIUM FOR WHICH ALGERIANS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE. IN AN EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH YOU HE HAD ASKED WHAT WE WERE SEEKING IN THE AREA AND YOU HAD SAID WE WERE SEEKING STRONG, INDEPENDENT NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS. THAT WAS IN ACCORD WITH ALGERIAN GOALS AND FOR THAT REASON HE HAD BEEN PREPARED TO GO ALONG WITH OUR POLICIES. WE HAD EXPERIENCED BEN BELLA AND KNEW WHAT HE WAS LIKE. 1965 HAD CHANGED ALL THAT AND ALGERIANS HAD FOLLOWED MODERATE COURSE. PROBLEMS SUCH AS VIETNAM MIGHT HAVE CAUSED CONSIDERABLE IRRITATION BUT HAD NOT AFFECTED BASIS OF OUR RELATIONS (IMPLICATION WAS THAT SAHARA WOULD). IN INTEREST GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS AND STABILITY ALGERIANS HAD NOT EXPLOITED OPPORTUNITIES SUCH AS THOSE PRESENTED BY COUP ATTEMPTS IN MOROCCO. THE BALANCE WHICH HAD BEEN MAINTAINED WAS NOW THREATENED HOWEVER AND RESULTS COULD NOT BE FORESEEN. IF THE UNITED STATES WANTED TO MAINTAIN THAT BALANCE WE SHOULD GET HASSAN TO CALL OFF HIS MARCH. HE WAS CONVINCED THAT WE COULD DO SO.

5. I REITERATED MY COMMENTS OF NIGHT BEFORE TO THE EFFECT THAT OUR INFLUENCE WAS LIMITED AND SAID THAT WHAT HE WAS ASKING FOR WAS NOT SOMETHING TO BE DONE WITH A LITTLE PUSH. I NOTED THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE AFFAIR RESTED PRIMARILY WITH THE PARTICIPANTS: MOROCCO, SPAIN, MAURITANIA AND ALGERIA. KING HASSAN HAD ALL OF US IN IMPASSE AND WE GATHERED HE THOUGHT THAT TO WITHDRAW FROM HIS PROJECT NOW WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO COMMITTING SUICIDE. PROBLEM WAS HOW TO FIND GRACEFUL WAY OUT FOR HASSAN. DID BOUMEDIENE HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS?

6. BOUMEDIENE SAID HE THOUGHT WALDHEIM PROPOSAL OFFERED GRACEFUL WAY OUT. LET IT BE ANNOUNCED THAT SPAIN WAS TURNING THE COLONY OVER TO THE UNITED NATIONS AS OF A FIXED DATE. THIS WOULD MEAN THE END OF IMPERIALIST CONTROL AND HASSAN COULD PROCLAIM THIS A VICTORY AND DISBAND THE MARCH.

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7. I ASKED WHAT BOUMEDIENE ENVISAGED AS SUBSEQUENT SCENARIO. HE SAID SOMETHING WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT WITHIN UN. I SAID THIS PRESUMABLY WOULD INVOLVE SELF-DETERMINATION AND THAT WAS SOMETHING MOROCCANS HAD INDICATED THEY WOULD OPPOSE.

8. BOUMEDIENE SAID THESE WERE POLITICAL PROBLEMS HE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO SOLVE. POINT WAS THAT HASSAN

HAD GOTTEN HIMSELF INTO IMPASSE. THERE WAS AN HONORABLE WAY OUT. IT WOULD POSE CERTAIN RISKS FOR HASSAN, BUT THE COURSE HE WAS PLANNING TO PURSUE NOW POSED EVEN GREATER RISKS. WHAT WAS HASSAN GOING TO DO AFTER HE GOT TO EL AIUN? HASSAN HAD NOT THOUGHT THIS THROUGH. PEOPLE WERE GOING TO BE KILLED AND ARMED STRUGGLE WAS GOING TO BEGIN AND THE END WAS NOWHERE IN SIGHT. ALGERIANS HAD AVOIDED CAUSING TROUBLE FOR HASSAN IN PAST, BUT THEY KNEW HOW TO DO SO.

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3266

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 ALGIERS 3226

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

9. I NOTED THAT IN CONVERSATION WITH ATHERTON, BOUMEDIENE HAD SAID SPANISH SAHARA WOULD BE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE. DID HE HAVE ANY THOUGHTS ABOUT POLITICAL VIABILITY? HE SAID AGAIN THAT THIS WAS NOT REALLY HIS PROBLEM. THERE WERE DECISIONS OF THE UN CALLING FOR EXERCISE OF RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION. THESE DECISIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE HONORED. THIS WAS THE ONLY POSSIBILITY WE HAD FOR PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. LET MOROCCANS DO THEIR BEST TO WIN SAHARAN PEOPLE OVER TO THEIR SIDE. THEY WERE ALREADY SPENDING A LOT OF MONEY TO THAT END. THEY COULD CONTINUE TO DO SO AND PERHAPS SAHRAOUI S WOULD VOTE TO BE PART OF MOROCCO. ALTERNATIVE WAS ULTIMATELY ARMED STRUGGLE, AND SOLDIERS COULD NOT SOLVE ANYTHING. IF MOROCCANS CONCLUDED THEY HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO GO AHEAD WITH MARCH, LET THEM DO SO IN FULL KNOWLEDGE THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT HAPPENED WOULD LIE WITH THEM. IT WAS NOT IN MOROCCO'S INTEREST TO BE IN CONFLICT WITH THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTION, BUT THE ALGERIANS WERE NOT AFRAID OF SUCH A CONFLICT IF IT CAME TO THAT. THEY WERE REVOLUTIONARIES

AND THEY WERE ACCUSTOMED TO FIGHTING.
BOUMEDIENE HAD NO THRONE TO LOSE. IF HE DISAPPEARED ANOTHER
STRUGGLER WOULD TAKE HIS PLACE. HE WAS NOT IN SITUATION
HASSAN WAS. HE DID NOT HAVE TO EXPORT HIS TROUBLE.

10. COMMENT: AM HAVING TROUBLE DECIDING WHAT TO MAKE OF
BOUMEDIENE'S REMARKS AND ATTITUDE. AM SURE HE MEANS WHAT
HE SAYS AND SHOULD BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY, BUT HE IS BEING
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PRUDENT AND MAKING NO DIRECT THREATS AND BURNING NO BRIDGES.
THIS PRESUMABLY REFLECTS THE LIMITED OPTIONS HE HAS AND HIS
POSITION MAY NOT BE AS STRONG AS HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE US BELIEVE,
PARTICULARLY GIVEN SUPPORT MOROCCANS SEEM TO HAVE RECEIVED
FROM OTHER ARABS.

11. I BELIEVE TONE TAKEN IN YOUR MESSAGE WAS JUST RIGHT
AND RECOMMEND WE MAINTAIN THAT POSTURE. HOPE WAY CAN
BE FOUND TO MAKE WALDHEIM PROPOSAL ACCEPTABLE TO MOROCCANS
AS WELL AS OTHERS.PARKER

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